

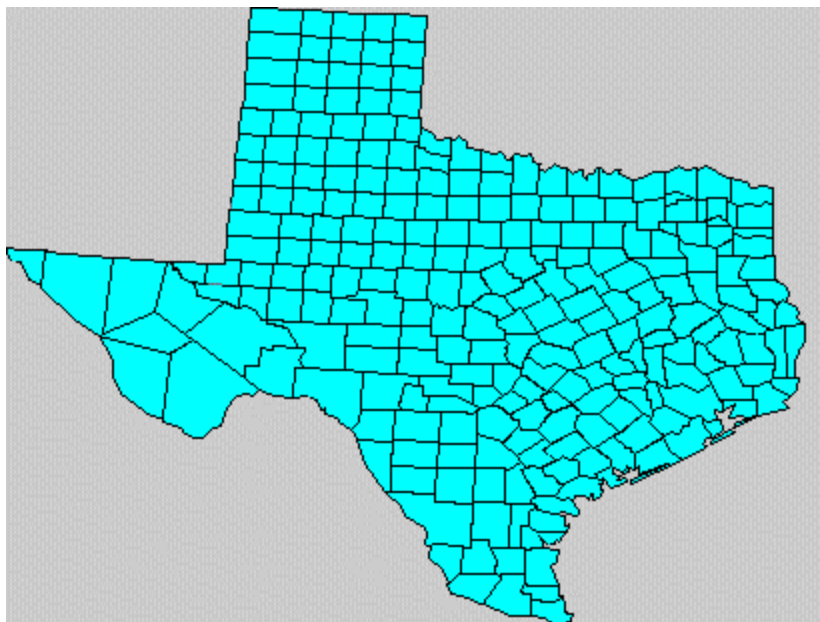
Office of National Drug Control Policy

Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse

Houston, TX

Profile of Drug Indicators

March 2001



ONDCP Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse staff compiled this profile by using the most recent data available from open sources. The data presented are as accurate as the sources from which they were drawn. The information contained in this profile should not be used to rank or compare States or jurisdictions, due to differences in data collection and reporting methods.

Houston, Texas

The following profile contains information on demographics, political figures, funding, programs, crime, drug use, drug trafficking, and enforcement statistics.

Demographics¹

- The following demographic data is on Harris County, which the City of Houston is located in.
- Total Population: 3,400,578 (2000 Census)
- Under 18 Years Old: 984,556
- Race/Ethnicity: White 58.7%; Black 18.5%; American Indian or Alaskan Native 0.4%; Asian 5.1%; Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander 0.1%; Hispanic Origin (can be of any race) 32.9%

Politics

- Mayor: Former ONDCP Director Lee P. Brown
- Director of Mayor's Office of Public Safety and Drug Policy: Donald K. Hollingsworth
- City Controller Sylvia R. Garcia
- Council Members: Annise D. Parker, Gordon Quan, Orlando Sanchez, Chris Bell, Carroll Robinson, Bruce Tatro, Carroll Mims Galloway, Mark Goldberg, Jew Don Boney, Rob Todd, Mark Ellis, Bert Keller, Gabrielle Vasquez, John Castillo
- Chief of Police: C.O. Bradford

Programs/Initiatives

- Houston HIDTA²
The Houston HIDTA was designated in 1990 and encompasses the city of Houston, the surrounding areas of Aransas, Brooks, Galveston, Hardin, Harris, Jefferson, Jim Wells, Kenedy, Kleberg, Liberty, Nueces, Orange, Refugio, San Patricio and Victoria counties.

The HIDTA also consists of Federal, State, and local authorities.

Participating Agencies:

Federal agencies: Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, Department of Defense, Drug Enforcement Administration, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Immigration and Naturalization Service, Internal Revenue Service, United States Attorneys Office, United States Customs Service, United States Coast Guard, United States Marshals Service.

State Agencies: Texas Department of Banking, Texas Department of Public Safety, Texas National Guard, Texas Office of the Attorney General.

Local Agencies: Beaumont Police Department, Chambers County Sheriffs Office, Corpus Christi Police Department, Hardin County Sheriffs Office, Harris County

Sheriffs Department, Houston Police Department, Jefferson County Sheriffs Office, Nueces County Sheriffs Office, Orange County Sheriffs Office, Pasadena Police Department and City of Baytown.

➤ Houston Crackdown³

Houston Crackdown is a division of The Mayors Office for Public Safety and Drug Policy. The program coordinates and supports volunteer projects in the areas of substance abuse prevention, treatment and law enforcement. Houston Crackdown also runs a 24-hour bilingual *Drug Information Hotline* which provides access to treatment and recovery resources, drug information for youth and parents, a means to report illegal drug activity, and how to get involved in community drug prevention efforts. There is also a *volunteer coalition* of individuals and organizations both in Houston and Harris County. A *community awareness campaign* about the negative effects of substance abuse is also part of the program.

➤ Mayor's Anti Gang Office⁴

Gang activity is having a significant impact on crime trends. In 1996, approximately 3,600 gang-related crimes were reported in Houston, a total nearly identical to the 3,565 gang crimes recorded in 1995, and 260 fewer than in 1994. Approximately 25% of Houston's identified gang population are juveniles and almost 10% are females. Houston's criminal street gangs remain loosely knit. Additionally, they have not yet achieved economic security or control of any neighborhood in the city. Houston Mayor Lee P. Brown established the Mayor's Anti-Gang Office and the Houston Police Department Gang Task Force in 1994. Together they provide a balanced approach, combining prevention and suppression tactics focused toward reduction of street gang growth and development. This office deals with the problem of gangs in Houston. Its major components are the City-Wide Anti Graffiti program, Campus-Based Gang Intervention Plan for School, Youth Service providers/ Neighborhood Based Crime Prevention, and Curfew Program. The program has distributed \$450,000 of community development block grant funds to 49 local youth service providers. The program also provides free training to civilians, police officers, probation officers, and teachers.

➤ Operation Renaissance

Operation Renaissance is a collaborative effort by the police department, other city departments, other government agencies, and various community groups to revivify the city's inner-city neighborhoods. Operation Renaissance employs a holistic approach and embraces the philosophy of Neighborhood Oriented Government and the Super Neighborhood concept. It is comprised of five pillars: (1) Narcotics Interdiction, (2) Directed Patrol, (3) Nuisance Abatement, (4) Trash Removal, and (5) Graffiti Abatement

The community assists the police by reporting known drug dealers and locations while the police utilize a two-phase approach in targeting identified individuals and locations. Phase One calls for a highly visible police presence in areas of known "open-air" markets and Phase Two targets indoor locations.⁵

➤ Executive office of Weed and Seed: Houston⁶

In 1995 Gulfton's ZIP Code, 77081, was identified as one of 11 in the state with the most referrals of delinquent youth to the juvenile justice system. The Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services (TDPRS) organized the Gulfton

Youth Development (GYDP) Program to implement a coordinated system of youth programs to address Gulfton's serious juvenile delinquency problems. In 1997, Gulfton was designated a federal Weed & Seed community.

Crime and Drug-Related Crime⁷

- The Crime Index Total in Houston rose from 127,817 in 1998 to 131,744 in 1999.

The Number of Offenses Known to Police in Houston 1996-1998

Offense	1997	1998	1999
Murder and non-negligent manslaughter	254	254	241
Forcible rape	790	654	748
Robbery	8,146	7,711	8,350
Aggravated assault	11,967	11,564	12,178
Burglary	23,967	23,065	24,744
Larceny-theft	64,925	64,070	66,068
Motor vehicle theft	20,795	20,070	19,445
Arson	1,581	1,641	1,735
Crime Index Total	130,844	127,817	131,744

- In Harris County during 1999 there were 17,815 arrests for drug offenses.⁸

Arrests in Harris County, 1999

Offense	Number	Percent of All Arrests
DWI	8,956	2.4
Liquor Law Violations	2,830	0.7
Public Intoxication	26,633	7.1
Drug Trafficking (All Drugs)	165	0.0
Drug Possession (All Drugs)	17,650	4.7
Marijuana Trafficking	78	N/A
Marijuana Possession	6,751	N/A
All Drug Offenses	17,815	4.7
Violent Crime	4,354	1.2

- In Houston during 1999 59.5% of male arrestees and 43.3% of female arrestees tested positive for drugs.⁹

Percent of Houston Arrestees Testing Positive for Drugs by Offense 1999

Offense	Cocaine		Marijuana		Meth		PCP		Any Drug	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Violent	30.5	11.8	36.9	16.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.5	57.4	26.5
Property	45.1	15.6	37.8	25.6	0.0	0.0	5.7	5.6	66.3	43.3
Drug	46.0	55.0	52.0	38.3	0.5	0.0	10.4	1.7	75.2	78.3
Prostitution	60.0	77.8	40.0	44.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	80.0	77.8
Other	32.1	22.5	32.8	31.4	0.0	0.2	7.6	3.3	53.3	41.2
Total	35.7	23.3	38.2	22.8	0.1	0.1	6.5	3.1	59.5	43.3

Drug Trafficking and Seizures¹⁰

- The Houston HIDTA's Threat Abstract..."Houston is the nation's fourth largest city and one of the nation's major narcotics gateways. Its proximity to Mexico, transportation infrastructure, racial and ethnic diversity, corporate economy, and international trade continue to make the Houston HIDTA one of the nation's primary distribution hubs, as well as a conduit for the movement of illegal drug proceeds to source countries. The Drug Trafficking Organizations are primarily Mexican and Colombian, but traffickers are from all over the world operate in Houston. Drug trafficking patterns indicate that overland routes continue to be the preferred method of transporting illegal drug to and through the Houston HIDTA. A maritime threat continues to be posed from the large volume of container cargo shipped through the region's ports, as well as from commercial and noncommercial vessels operating in the Texas Gulf Coast region. Air smuggling, via private aircraft and "passenger carry" on commercial airlines, is a threat due to the high volume of air traffic through the area and the number of landing facilities in the region. Sixty-six percent of the 164 identified drug trafficking organizations identified in 2000 used ground transportation, 12% air, 5% maritime, and 2% rail. Forty-eight percent of the drug trafficking organizations traffic cocaine, 34% marijuana, 9% heroin, 7% methamphetamine, and 7% hallucinogens. Thirty-nine percent distribute two or more drug types. Money laundering organizations ship bulk currency in commercial and personal vehicles shipped via sea or driven into Mexico. Additionally, legal and illicit wire transmitters in the region send money worldwide. Local gangs, trying to avoid affiliation by not displaying gang-related clothing and tattoos, traffic and disseminate drugs while attempting to appear legitimate in owning record shop businesses, auto detail shops, entertainment enterprises and other cash intensive activities."

Juveniles¹¹

- A 1999 survey of Houston high school students indicated that 40.6% of them had tried marijuana at least once in their lifetimes. The national average for lifetime marijuana use was 47.2%.

Percent of Houston High School Students Using Selected Drugs, 1999

Drug Type and Use	Female	Male	Total
Lifetime Marijuana Use (1)	35.5%	44.9%	40.6%
Current Marijuana Use (2)	13.9	23.5	19.0
Lifetime Cocaine Use	6.1	10.3	8.7
Current Cocaine Use	2.1	5.1	3.7
Lifetime Inhalant Use	7.2	8.1	7.8
Current Inhalant Use	2.3	1.9	2.1
Lifetime Heroin Use	1.2	2.7	2.0
Lifetime Methamphetamine Use	3.0	4.4	4.1
Lifetime Illegal Steroid Use	2.7	3.6	3.2
Lifetime Injecting Illegal Drug Use (3)	1.0	1.8	1.4

1. Lifetime Use = ever tried drug in life

2. Current Use = used drug one or more times in last 30 days before survey

3. Used a needle to inject drugs

Drug Deaths¹²

➤ There were a total of 412 drug-related deaths in Harris County during 1999.

Drug and Alcohol Related Deaths in Harris County, 1999	
ALCOHOL	
Total Alcohol Deaths	1,421
Direct Alcohol Deaths	270
Indirect Alcohol Deaths	1,151
DRUGS	
Total Drug Deaths	412
Direct Drug Deaths	256
Indirect Drug Deaths	156

Drug Treatment¹³

➤ There were a total of 7,066 adults admitted to treatment in Harris County in 1999

Characteristics of Adult Treatment Clients in Harris County, 1999	
Total Admissions	7,066
% of All Admissions in State	17.5%
Average Age	35.5
Average Age at 1 st Use	22.8
% Male	59.0%
% Using Needles	11.2%
% African American	50.4%
% White	36.4%
% Hispanic	12.3%
% Criminal Justice Referral	13.4%
Average Education	11.3
% Employed	13.4%
Average Income	\$5,081
% Homeless	20.2%
% Live With Family	65.0%

Sources

¹ U.S. Census Bureau Web site: <http://www.census.gov>

² Office of National Drug Control Policy Web site, Houston HIDTA—FY 2000 Site Fact Sheet: <http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/enforce/hidta/hous-fs.html>

³ City of Houston Web site: <http://www.ci.houston.tx.us/citygovt/mayor/opstdp/crackdown.htm>

⁴ City of Houston Web site: <http://www.ci.houston.tx.us/citygovt/mayor/antigang/profile.html>

⁵ Houston Police Department Web Site: http://www.ci.houston.tx.us/departme/police/operation_renaissance.htm

⁶ U.S. Department of Justice, Executive Office of Weed and Seed Web site: <http://www.weedseed.org/siteinfo.asp>

⁷ U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Crime in the United States 1998*, October 1999

⁸ TCADA, *Indicators of Alcohol and Drug Abuse in Texas, 1999*, January 2001 <http://www.tcada.state.tx.us/research/99indicators.pdf>

⁹ U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, *ADAM: 1998 Annual Report on Adult and Juvenile Arrestees*, April 1999.

¹⁰ Office of National Drug Control Policy Web site, Houston HIDTA—FY 2000 Site Fact Sheet: <http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/enforce/hidta/hous-fs.html>

¹¹ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance — United States, 1999*, June 2000.

¹² TCADA, *Indicators of Alcohol and Drug Abuse in Texas, 1999*, January 2001 <http://www.tcada.state.tx.us/research/99indicators.pdf>

¹³ Ibid.

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